Report on Homeless and Transient Men in Toronto, 1960

SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT MEN

JUNE, 1960

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Canadian Welfare Council
Catholic Adjustment Bureau
Good Neighbours' Club
Metropolitan Toronto Police Department
National Employment Service
Salvation Army Men's Hostel
Salvation Army Welfare Centre
Scott Mission

Toronto Department of Fublic Selfare

United Church of Canada

Fred Victor Mission

Toronto Home Missions Council

ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED BY STAFF

Evangel Hall

Holy Trinity Church

House of Providence

John Howard Society

Neighborhood Workers Association

Yonge Street Mission

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	<u>A</u>	٠.	Committee Terms of Reference	Page 1
SECTION	В	-	Nature and Extent of the Problem	2
			 I. Historical Background II. Social and Psychological Factors (Overall Economic Conditions, Seasonal Unemployment, Migratory and 	2 3–5
			Casual Labour, Technological Changes, Early School Leaving, Psychological Factors) III. Classification of Homeless and Transient Men 11. Characteristics - Residence, Occupation, Employability, Age, Personal and Social Problems.	5 5 - 7
			2. Types of Homeless and Transient Men 3, Homeless Men in Other Communities IV Size of the Problem 1. Amount of Service Provided 2. Trends 3. Costs	7→9 9→10 10 10–12 12 13
SECTION	C	-	Nature and Extent of Present Services I. The National Picture - Unemployment Insurance, Unemployment Assistance,	13 13–14
			Employment Services, Vocational Training II. The Toronto Picture Material Aid Shelter Counselling, Recreation, Employment Services Health Services Vocational Training Social Rehabilitation	15 16 17 18 18
SECTION	<u>D</u> •	•	Assessment of Present Services I. Types of Services Required II. Adequacy of Present Services 1. Legislation 2. Division of Responsibility 3. Quality of Existing Services 4. Gaps in Services 5. Co-ordination and Planning 6. Record Keeping and Statistics 7. Research Needs	19 19-20 20 20 21 21 22 23 23 23
			III. Committee's Recommendations	23-25

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT MEN

SECTION A

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee on Homeless and Transient Men was established by the Board of the Social Planning Council to examine services at present being provided in Toronto to homeless and transient men; to make some assessment of the needs of these men and the adequacy of existing services to meet those needs; to deliniate areas in which there were gaps in services and finally to make recommendations on services which should be provided in order to serve properly the homeless and transient man.

The Committee was established in response to growing interest among a number of groups in the community in services to the needy homeless and transient man. In particular the Council had been approached by several organizations which were either providing service to this group and were thinking about the directions in which their programs should develop, or on the other hand were considering establishing new services to these men. These organizations included the Toronto Men's Hostel, the Good Neighbours' Club, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and the Diocesan Council of Social Service of the Anglican Church. In addition, two other organizations, the United Church (Fred Victor Mission) and the Scott Mission had building programs to improve and expand service. In light of these developments and in order to be of help to organizations wishing to work with it in planning services the Council agreed that a study was urgently required.

The first problem faced by the Committee was one of definition. The homeless man it agreed was one with little or no tie with a family group and who was thus without the economic or social support a family home normally provides.

The Committee concentrated therefore on the homeless man, as defined, whether transient or domiciled in the city. The scope of its work therefore included not only the transient man, that is the man passing through the community, or staying in it for a short time, but also the indigent unattached man living in the city. It was necessary to take this broad approach since both groups of men turn to the same organizations for help and the organizations do not distinguish between them in giving service,

Secondly, the Committee recognized that in many respects the problem of homeless and transient men in Toronto was influenced by factors lying beyond the borders of the city. Therefore it looked briefly at federal and provincial policies and policies in other communities which provide the overall framework within which local services are developed, or which affect the situation in Toronto.

The Committee's work was based primarily upon face to face discussions with representatives of several organizations working in this field. In this way it was able to gain a first hand impression of the types of services being provided and also benefit from the knowledge and experience of those working in the field. Information was also obtained from council staff interviews with additional organizations.

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The following report summarizes the information gained. It is limited in that information upon which an estimate of the numbers of individuals involved was not possible. No intensive sample study was possible and statistics provided very often estimates rather than precise counts. In particular the relative numbers of transient and resident homeless men cannot be stated with any degree of confidence. Estimates vary considerably. Nevertheless a general picture emerges which though drawn in broad strokes provides a reasonable basis for future planning.

SECTION B

NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The problem of the homeless or transient man is as old as human history. In its present form it is a product of the industrial revolution of the past two centuries. The movement of population from settled agricultural life to less secure industrial work, the demands of the primary and transportation industries for mobile, seasonal, and casual labour, continuing changes in demands for labour (business cycles), technological changes have all been factors in the displacement of men from the place of birth and upbringing or accustomed domicile. Increasingly the homeless transient man has turned to the large cities where opportunities for work are more available and where resources to meet his needs in times of omergency exist in greater abundance. At the same time there has developed within the modern industrial city a corps of resident unemployable men less mobile and predominately occupationally, physically or mentally handicapped. Having few resources the homeless man congregates in older and poorer sections of the city, known generally as "skid row".

Public assistance for homeless and transient men in Canada has, in the past, been shaped and limited by a social policy which has placed responsibility for aid to the poor upon local governments. Each community must care for its own, the outsider being assisted reluctantly, if at all. Thus the homeless man has been dependent upon private charity and in Canada to a large extent upon churches and missions.

The doctrine of local responsibility in its pure form of course no longer exists in Canada. Gradually social policy has been adapted to modern conditions and the federal and provincial governments have assumed increased responsibility for the unemployed, the handicapped, and the agod. Bespite increasing assumption by governments of responsibility, however, private and religious organizations continue to play a vital role,

II. SCCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

A full examination of the causes of homeless and transient indigency was of course beyond the scope of the Committee's enquiries. Nevertheless it was realized that some understanding of underlying factors is essential if the community is to be able to effectively plan services to meet existing needs. Without such understanding the problem tends to be clouded by considerations of moral worth; the needy man becomes typed as the "undeserving tramp"; unnecessary suffering is perpetuated. Problems arising from the codes of behaviour at least as reported by agency representatives cannot of course be overlooked, but it is the Committee's opinion that these can best be assessed when related to social and economic trends and to present knowledge of human behaviour. The problem cannot be totally explained in terms of a wilful flouting of mores or in terms of social maladjustment.

The following appeared to the Committee to be important contributory factors:

- coverall Economic Conditions. Undoubtedly the level of unemployment is basic. Thus in Toronto the number of unplaced applicants during the past two years, as reported by the National Employment Service, have been higher than any time since 1943. At the same time most of the agencies consulted by the Committee have reported increasing demands for service, and the need for greater job opportunities. The problem is complicated by the fact that each recession leaves in its wake men who, as a result of prolonged unemployment, have lost the motivation to work, or who, are unable to re-establish themselves in the labour market because of lack of skill, age or other factors.
- Seasonal Unemployment. The problem of seasonal unemployment has engaged the attention of all levels of government in Canada. The number of unplaced applicants at Mational Employment Service during the summer has been only approximately one—third of the number during the winter, All organizations report that demand for service is greater during the winter months. Many seasonal workers "winter" in the city, depending largely upon unemployment insurance benefits or savings, turning when necessary to community resources for assistance.

There is evidence, however, that as a result of technological changes some industries such as construction and road building are becoming less seasonal in nature. It was not possible, however, to assess the effect of this trend upon the problem of homeless and transient men.

Demand for Migratory Labour. The demand by certain industries for migratory workers, e.g., agriculture, lumbering, fishing, etc., is closedy related to the demand for seasonal labour. In the past it has been a major reason for the transient worker moving from community to community. Again, there is evidence that our economy depends less than in the past on the migrant worker who moves from one part of the country to another. As a result of technological change they are able to employ a stable year-round workforce. This trend is born out by indications as noted below that the single unattached man has a more permanent domicile than formerly.

II. SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS (contid.)

- Demands for Casual Part-time Work. Despite technological changes there is still a steady demand for part-time, casual unskilled work. The National Employment Service operates a casual labour pool and reports that there has been an increase in placements of this kind over the past three years. Many unattached men depend primarily upon this type of work for a livelihood. It was reported to the Committee by one agency that many men come to the city because of the opportunities it offers for casual labour. Demands for this type of work fluctuate with general economic conditions. With rising wages many employers turn to the casual labour pool for unskilled temporary jobs since they feel it uneconomical to use their permanent and more expensive workforce for these purposes.
- e) Technological Changes. Technological change is affecting not only the importance of migratory or seasonal labour, it is leading to increased demands for skilled labour, with resulting unemployment among those who are not skilled. When the labour market is tight employers become more particular and may even demand unnecessary skills as a method of screening applicants. All agencies report that the majority of men coming to them for assistance are unskilled workers. The middle aged or older unskilled worker is particularly affected.
- f) Early School Leaving. The Committee considered evidence that youth in large numbers are leaving school without adequate training for work in an increasingly technical economy. It agreed that the untrained youth of today is likely to become the unskilled, unemployed and homeless man of tomorrow.

It has been estimated for example that during the 1960's about 100,000 more young people every year will be reaching the job hunting age!) and the question arises how can these large numbers be absorbed into a labour market demanding an increasingly higher level of skills. As a result of a survey of educational attainments of job applicants. The National Employment Service concluded that lack of education was a major cause of being out of work. It has published a pamphlet to bring this to the attention of the public and to emphasize the fact that "nowadays no young person can afford not to have a sound education"?) The 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth stated that "Today's school drop-outs may look forward to a lifetime of unemployment."

¹⁾ See Financial Post, March 12, 1960.

²⁾ See Are You Thinking of Leaving School; Ottawa Unemployment Insurance Commission.

II. SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS (contid.)

g) Psychological Factors. The psychological study of the homeless man is largely an unexplored area. The Committee, however, heard repeated evidence, born out by many other studies that many homeless men are scriously incapacitated by personality problems which prevent the assumption of normal social responsibilities. Broken homes or lack of a stable family background, intelligence that is below normal, absence of motivation or ambition, inability to plan were causes or characteristics cited. Addiction to alcohol appears to be a significant factor, but the labelling of the homeless man as an alcoholic does not appear to be warranted. Undoubtedly the tavern plays an important role in the social lives of many men and leads to improvident expenditures of slender resources. There is evidence that drinking acts as a cause of homelessness largely in combination with other factors.

Note on Psychological and Social Factors. There are undoubtedly a number of factors leading to homelessness and transiency among men the relative importance of which may change from time to time. The question arises as to the extent to which our society is faced inevitably with a corps of unemployed or underemployed men. To date little attempt has been made to answer this question in terms of program to rehabilitate or retrain those who have been displaced from the labour market.

III. CLASSIFICATION OF HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT MEN.

From the beginning the Committee recognized that unemployed, homeless and transient men were not a homogeneous group, but were, in fact, comprised of various sorts of men with differing needs. One of the major difficulties faced in its studies was the delineation of these different groups. It was able, from information received, to identify the different types of men, but could estimate their relative importance numerically only in very general terms.

Homeless men may be considered from the point of view of their residence or domicile, or more broadly their mobility. Again, they may be classified according to their employability, their occupational status, or their age. Another approach is to classify the men according to their attitudes, motivation, or expectations. All of these methods are of value in attempting to define the major groupings among homeless men.

1. Characteristics

a) Residence or Domicile.

To what degree are unattached men applying to public and charitable organizations transient men - men, that is who are passing through the city or who are only temporarily residing here? Conversely to what degree are they part of a larger group of resident unemployed? Quite varying reports were received, some organizations reporting that the majority of men assisted were from out of town; others stated that the number of transients seemed to be declining. There are indications that organizations providing hostel accommodation receive the greatest number of transients. Those providing emergency welfare assistance such as meals or clothing contact a proportionately greater number of the

III. CLASSIFICATION OF HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT MEN (cont'd.)

a) Residence or Domicile (cont'd.)

resident unemployed man. The picture is complicated by a number of men who are neither permanent residents nor transient men, but who reside here for varying lengths of time, particularly during the winter months. One downtown church estimated that 25 percent of the men applying for help were transients, 25 percent were temporarily domiciled in Toronto, and 50 percent were permanent residents. Another downtown mission said that three-fourths of their clients were residents and only about three percent were transients.

To sum up, the problem of the homaless unattached man is much broader and deeper than one of transiency. In fact, there is evidence (see below) that the homeless man of our modern urban communities is becoming less mobile, more fixed in his domicile.

b) Occupational Background.

Indigent homeless men both, resident and transient are predominately unskilled or semi-skilled workers. There are undoubtedly of course many seasonal workers who have skills in various lines of work who get good jobs "in season". Also there appear to be older men no longer physically able to pursue their usual occupation and with no other marketable skills to replace it. For those who are employable, therefore, job placement must depend largely upon job openings for casual or permanent unskilled or semi-skilled work, or upon vocational training either on the job or at school:

c) Employability.

To what degree do the problems of homeless unemployed men result from physical and mental handicaps, which prevent productive employment? One mission estimated very generally that only 10 percent of its clients could be classified as able bodied and employable; of the remainder 20 percent are physically handicapped, 25 percent are pensioners, 30 percent are mentally subnormal, or lacking in motivation, and 15 percent are alcoholics. Two other religious groups reported as follows:

Unemployed but seriously looking for work	P.C. 50	P.C. 25
Unable to work because of physical or mental disability	25 (old age)	15
Could work but have lost interest or ability to hold job	12½	50
Deliberately avoid work and live off wits	12½	10

The major factors adversely affecting employability, in the opinion of many workers in the field are - (1) Personal instability or lack of motivation resulting from family background, lack of education, low intelligence, or prolonged unemployment; (2) age; (3) physical handicap.

III. CLASSIFICATION OF HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT MEN (cont'd.)

d) Age.

Homeless and transient men in Toronto fall in all age groups. Some agencies reported a predominance of young adults, others have experienced increasing numbers of men in the middle or later years. The following are estimates provided by three organizations.

	(1) P.C.	(2) P.C.	(3) P.C.
under 25 years	5	5	<u>; 5</u>
25 - 44 years	20	50	50
45 - 64 years	50	25	25-30
65 years and over	25	20	15-20

These three organizations which it will be noted report 50 - 75 percent of clients in their middle or later years also reported a higher proportion of non-transient men. Those serving predominately men from out of town also reported a greater proportion of younger men. The proportion of men above estimated to be 65 or over is greatly in excess of the proportion this age group compared of the total population.

e) Personal and Social Problems.

As noted above psychological handicaps resulting in inability to "settle down", to remain steadily at work seems to be provalent among homeless and transient men. This has been noted by nearly all students of the subject with varying degrees of sophistication. Undoubtedly also mental ill health of a more serious nature and mental retardation are significant factors. Evidence of maladjustment and anti-social attitudes, as reported to the Committee, is found in (1) the numbers of men separated from wives and children; (2) a tendency toward petty offenses, drunkeness, petty theft, fighting; (3) a frequent unwillingness to take work when it is offered; (4) heavy drinking.

2. Types of Homeless and Transient Men - Summary of Characteristics

In light of the above the following appear to be the major groups of homeless and unemployed men in Toronto.

- a) The transient worker who is passing through the cityen route to work. He is not necessarily a welfare problem.
- The out of town man who has come to the city to look for work here.

 He may be seeking permanent residence or casual work. If he cannot find work he becomes a welfare problem particularly if he cannot claim or if he exhausts unemployment insurance benefits. He often needs assistance pending his first pay check. Because he has not established residence he may not be eligible for unemployment assistance.

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III. CLASSIFICATION OF HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT MEN (cont'd.)

The seasonal and casual worker. The seasonal worker may with unemployment insurance or casual work retain his independence; during the off-season he tends to be a transient or temporary resident. The casual worker may be a transient, appearing and re-appearing in the city, or he may be permanently living in the city. He is a "marginal worker" without much job security and few personal resources.

The above groups (a to c) would appear generally to be younger men under 45, unskilled, or semi-skilled, physically able to work. The number of those men vary with business conditions. Their major needs, in times of emergency, are food, shelter, clothing, recreational facilities, counselling, vocational guidance, and vocational training. Adequate service to these groups could do much to prevent chronic dependency through middle and later years.

- d) The resident unemployed and unattached men is often referred to as the man on skid row. Many are unemployable because of age or physical or mental handicaps. A large number receive pensions veterans pensions, disability pensions, old age pensions, or general welfare assistance. They live predominately in cheap rooming houses in the downtown area. In times of emergency they turn to hostels or to welfare agencies, missions or churches for assistance. This group includes:
 - (i) The middle aged or older unskilled worker unemployed because of age;
 - (ii) The "burnt-out" pensioner and the Old Age pensioner;
 - (iii) The chronically maladjusted man including the mentally ill and mentally deficient, the wino, the petty offender who lives in and out of Don Gaol and Mimico Reformatory;
 - (iv) The physically disabled and permanently unemployable man.

In developing services for Group 'd' emphasis should be placed upon rehabilitation and reclamation. It should be noted, however, that there is a general opinion that many of these men are beyond rehabilitation, but as one agency representative stated - if only a small number could be restored to useful life the effort would be worthwhile. Treatment services, recreational facilities, sheltered employment, casework, and employment services should be planned in a co-ordinated fashion.

e) The tramp or panhandler who lives off his wits and is predominately transient, moving from one community to another is in the minority. It is therefore a mistake to identify all homeless and transient men with this relatively small element. It should be noted that men may pass from one group to another starting as wanderers or migratory workers and as a result of social or cultural factors decline to the point where they become permanent residents of skid row. It is to prevent this point being reached that preventive and rehabilitation services are important

III. CLASSIFICATION OF HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT MEN (contid.)

3. Homeless Men in Other Communities.

Since the turn of the century or earlier many studies have been made of the homeless and transient man in North America. Among the most recent is a study undertaken by the University of Chicago in 1958 of the population of the Skid Row Areas of Chicago. The study made many significant findings, among them the following: —

- the notion that skid row residents are highly mobile is mistaken. Except for a minority of railroad and freight yard workers. Skid row is comprised of long term residents who do not move about very much. 70.5 percent of the sample of men interviewed had lived in Chicago for at least one year preceding the study. Earlier investigations in New York City and Detroit had revealed a similar pattern.
- residents of skid row were considerably older on the average than the general adult male population. There are an "extraordinarily large proportion of men in their 40's and 50's."
- occupants of skid row are heavily concentrated toward the bottom of the socio-economic scale of occupations. For most part the men's working opportunities are confined to the lowest paying, most irregular and most disagreeable tasks available. Casual or temporary day work is important; 45 percent of all jobs held on skid row during the week preceding study were "spot jobs".
- almost one half of the men were drawing some form of pension or public assistance payments,
- their marital status was radically different from the general population. An extraordinarily high proportion had failed to marry or if they had their marriage had ended in separation or divorce.
- by their own assessment approximately one-third was too old or too disabled to work. However, independent medical assessment indicated that in terms of physical condition only about 10 percent were totally incapable of work because of age or disability. The remaining 90 percent should be able to do some gainful work in its nature extending from sheltered employment to some full-time work in the community. About one half were handicapped to the extent that some special consideration would be necessary on the part of the employer.
- the incidence of chronic illness is high. The highest rates for many of the chronic ailments were found among middled aged men.
- in terms of ability to go to work acute illness had two to two and a half times the disabling effect upon skid row than it has upon the male population generally.

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III. CLASSIFICATION OF HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT MEN (contid.)

3. Homeless Men in Other Communities. (contid.)

- skid row men in Chicago are subject to death rates almost unbelievably high. Death rates of the magnitude calculated for skid row never have existed for the general population at any time in history of the United States. "At most ages skid row inhabitants may expect to live less than one half as long as the general population of the same age". Skid row is an important incubator of tuberculosis infection.

Some interesting data on <u>transients</u> comes from a study carried out by the British Columbia Department of Social Welfare, The study was based on a sample of 100 consecutive cases in Region III (Ckanagan Valley and Upper Fraser River) in June and July 1959. The following were some of the characteristics of the men.

Age - The highest number are in the 31-35 age group which is probably the most productive age for unskilled labourers. There is a drop in the 36-45 age groups and then another small increase in the 46-55 age groups.

Marital Status - 88 percent of these men are either single, separated or divorced. In view of the fact that only eight percent are under 25 this would seem a rather startling figure.

Birth Place - Only eight percent are British Columbian born. However, 83 percent are Canadian born, and this may perhaps be a higher proportion than that found in the more settled working force of the province.

Regions Visited - Men moved from region to region, but more men visited Region III than any other perhaps because of the seasonal nature of employment there and its geographical location.

76 men of the 100 transients accounted for 281 separate applications in Region III alone.

IV. SIZE OF THE PROBLEM

1. Amount of Service Provided.

The Committee sought information on the number of men served by agencies consulted during 1959. Because of different methods of record keeping and because individuals apply repeatedly to one or more organizations it was not possible to estimate the total number of different individuals served.

IV. SIZE OF THE PROBLEM (cont'd.)

1. Amount of Service Provided (cont'd.

However, the following shows clearly that serving the homeless and transient man in Toronto is a large scale business. All figures unless otherwise stated are for 1959.

Salvation Army Hostel

Toronto Department of Welfare; Single Men's Division

Salvation Army Hostel

6,331 received hostel care, monthly average 527.

19,091 free night lodgings, 96,901 free meals.

(150,675 beds and 70,420 meals were paid for by transient men at Salvation Army Hostel)

Fred Victor Mission (Emergency Shelter)

80 - 160 men per night during winter of 1960.

Catholic Adjustment Bureau (Emergency assistance and counselling)

Approximately 5,000 cases of assistance to destitute, mostly men

Scott Mission

180,000 meals, 79,000 articles of men's clothing. In winter months feeds about 500 men.

Good Neighbours Club

Membership of 1,350 men over 50 years of age.

Evangel Hall

Approximately 200 men per month.

Holy Trinity Church

Approximately 100 a week in winter months; 75 a week in summer.

Yonge Street Mission

24,500 cases of assistance; 21,624 meals and lunches; 20,581 pieces of clothing; 373 lodgings; 1,400 food parcels.

Toronto Men's Hostel

Monthly average of 122 men received meals or lodgings during January - June 1959.

House of Providence

Approximately 100 men per day, provided sandwiches and coffee in the mornings in 1960.

IV. SIZE OF THE PROBLEM (contid.)

1. Amount of Service Provided (cont'd.)

The above figures do not exhaust the amount of service given in the city to unattached transient and homeless men. Other organizations working in this field included The Home of the Good Shepherd, The Salvation Army Rehabilitation Centre, and many downtown churches. But they effectively demonstrate the magnitude of the problem. 1)

2. Trends.

Over the past decade the numbers of homeless and transient men turning to community resources have increased significantly. Thus in 1948 the Salvation Army provided some 9,900 free lodgings and some 14,200 free meals. In 1959 in a new and larger hostel it provided some 15,000 free lodgings and 97,000 free meals. From 1957 to 1960 the number of free night lodgings provided during the period January to March rose from 2,535 to 6,254 and free meals rose from 9,989 to 37,458. In the winter of 1948-1949 Scott Mission provided 50,000 meals; for the whole of 1959 they served 180,000 meals. In 1948 Holy Trinity Church was helping three to four men per day, in 1959-1960 it was helping about 100 per week. From 1956-1957 to 1958-1959 instances of assistance at the Yonge Street Mission increased from some 18,000 to 24,000. Men in City Hostels have increased from 236 in January 1951 to 1124 in January 1959. Department of Public Welfare figures show a considerable increase in 1958. The number of men in City Hostels in January of that year was 1,150 compared to 155 the previous year.

Workers in the field gave three major reasons for the above increases - (1) Increasing population of the country generally, and of Metropolitan Toronto in particular; (2) Increased unemployment during the past two or three years particularly during the winter months; (3) Increase in facilities. With regard to the last a number of organizations expressed the opinion that increases in facilities to meet growing demand in turn attract additional men.

- Information provided by the Welfare Council of Halifax showed that in February 1959 an aggregate of some 300 men approached 17 organizations for assistance.
- 2) Figures for 1948 are taken from the Study on Homeless and Transient Men in Toronto by Gladys Dunn a M.S.W. student thesis prepared in 1949.

IV. SIZE OF THE PROBLEM (cont'd.)

3.) Costs

The Committee did not attempt to assess the costs incurred in serving homeless and transient men. Undoubtedly, however, they must be considerable. The cost of assistance given by the Salvation Army Hostel in 1959 was \$40,713. It was almost twice as much as the costs of assistance given in 1956. Over and beyond the cost of operating expenses is the investment in physical plant. In order to build new mission headquarters the Scott Mission on Spadina Avenue has launched a building campaign for \$750,000. In addition to the more obvious capital and operating costs of public and private welfare and religious organizations are more hidden costs - the costs, for example, of medical care provided both the in-patient and out-patient departments.

There is a sizeable investment of dollars, service and devotion in meeting the needs of the indigent homeless man. The major questions are is such investment inevitable? Could it be directed into more effective channels?

SECTION C

MATURE AND EXTENT OF PRESENT SERVICES

I. THE NATIONAL PICTURE

Governmental assistance to transient and homeless men is provided in Canada by all levels of government. At the federal level two programs are of major importance. Unemployment Insurance with the closely related National Employment Service, and the Unemployment Assistance Act. Under the latter the Federal Government meets 50 percent of the costs of means test assistance to unemployed persons whether able bodied or handicapped.

Unemployment Insurance is of course of basic importance as a means of support for men during temporary unemployment. Amendments to the Act during recent years have been designed to meet the problem of more extended seasonal unemployment. However, Unemployment Insurance does not cover all occupations and it cannot provide benefits for periods of prolonged unemployment. The permanently unemployed, the unemployed man who has not been in covered employment, whose claims are slight or who has exhausted his benefits must depend upon public assistance provided to the unemployed.

Unemployment assistance is provided in Ontario and in most other provinces by local municipalities, the costs being shared by the provincial and the federal government in accordance with provincial legislation and the federal Unemployment Assistance Act. In Ontario municipalities meet 20 percent, of the cost of assistance, the province 30 percent, the federal government 50 percent. Under this sharing arrangement unemployment assistance is payable to both the able bodied and the unemployable.

I. THE NATIONAL PICTURE (contid.)

Prior to it the province shared with municipalities only in the costs of assistance to <u>unemployable</u> men. The elimination of this distinction between the able bodied and the unemployable together with a higher level of reimbursement has provided opportunity for the extension of service to homeless and transient men. The costs of both direct cash relief and of care in hostels are re-imburseable in accordance with the formula noted above.

Despite the growth of both federal and ial responsibility, municipalities in most parts of Canada tain proportion of costs of assistance. Thus programs are requirements and too frequently only the most min true is granted to the non-resident. In some areas ties still follow the policy of moving the transient man on elsewhere. This tends to increase mobility, reduces opportunities for services that would help men put down roots and stabilize their lives.

The Committee heard evidence of increasing concern in many municipalities. Major emphasis in most communities has been placed upon hostel accommodation. The Committee noted that in Alberta hostels are operated by the Provincial government. In many instances public welfare departments make use of private hostels either referring men to them, or purchasing services from them.

Lack of uniformity of services throughout Canada, and emphasis upon temporary aid results in unequal burdens upon local governments and encourages unnecessary movement of men. The problem of a large city, such as Toronto, which because of its large population and its economy has developed greater resources may thus be compounded.

Programs other than financial aid are also of course important. The Federal National Employment Service in Toronto operates a casual labour pool, youth counselling services, and special placement services for the handicapped and the older worker. Throughout the country it can advise men who are moving to other communities of job opportunities elsewhere. In the field of vocational training the Canadian Vocational Training Co-ordination Act provides under three schedules for the vocational training or re-training of unemployed persons generally (Schedulo M) of youth (Schedule O), and of the physically and mentally disabled (Schedule R). Costs of training are shared by the Federal and Provincial Governments. Under Schedule R the Chtaric Government has initiated a program of training grants for the disabled. There has been, however, little implementation of the other schedules.

II. THE TORONTO PICTURE

There are in Metropolitan Toronto some 15 organizations whose services, or a major part of whose services, are designed to assist homeless and transient men. The services provided are primarily temporary accommodation, meals and emergency welfare assistance in cash or kind. They include the Single Men's Division of the Toronto Department of Welfare, the Salvation Army and the Missions. In addition many downtown churches provide emergency assistance.

II. THE TORONTO PICTURE (cont'd.)

In addition of course are a great number of organizations public and private whose services are frequently required by homeless and transient men. These include federal and provincial health and welfare services, and the services of municipal welfare departments, hospitals, public health departments, voluntary health agencies, correctional agencies, family service agencies, homes for the aged and a variety of organizations for veterans. The following outlines major programs by fields of service.

1.) Material Aid

The extent and nature of financial assistance available to the needy homeless man depends upon a variety of factors including residence, employability, age, veterans status. He may be eligible for aid under one of the categorical assistance programs — Old Age Assistance (65-69) or disabled persons allowances together with the supplementary assistance granted by the municipality to recipients of these allowances. If a veteran (and many are), he may be in receipt of a Veterans' Pension or War Veterans' Allowance; if not covered by allowances or pensions he may, if a legal resident, be eligible for municipal general welfare assistance. Failing Unemployment Insurance or any of the above or in addition to them he may turn to a substantial number of private and religious organizations for assistance.

Undoubtedly services of public financial aid are extensive. Information on amounts of service given above demonstrates, however, that private charity is still playing a vital role in meeting material needs. Many hundreds of men appear weekly at the Salvation Army, the House of Providence, the Catholic Adjustment Bureau and the Missions to receive food, clothing, cash assistance, or tickets. They travel from one resource to the other. Information I ceived by the Committee suggested several reasons for this. They are (1) lack of eligibility for public assistance; (2) the exhaustion of pension or allowance checks before the end of the month; (3) the ready availability of aid. With regard to (3) it was pointed out that some men are content to eke out an existence by continually doing the rounds.

This much is clear. Private charitable funds are extensively supplementing public aid. Can this be explained only in terms of improvidence on the part of recipients or by an inadequate level of pension or assistance benefits?

II. THE TORONTO PICTURE (cont'd.)

2.) Shelter

Temporary accommodation for both the resident and homeless transient men is provided as follows:

Men's Hostel - Toronto Department of Welfare	350 beds
Salvation Army Men's Hostel	400 beds
Fred Victor Mission (under construction)	110 beds
Kingsley Hall	40 beds

The two major hostels now reperating, the City Hostel and the Salvation Army Hostel both provide lodgings and two meals. In both free care is provided but the Salvation Army also provides accommodation at reasonable cost (75¢ per night, 35¢ per meal) for men who can pay. In both, length of stay permitted for assistance cases is flexible. At least two nights lodgings are provided if necessary, but this can be extended if it appears warranted. To be eligible for the City Hostel men must have registered with the National Employment Service and be ineligible for Unemployment Insurance. In addition to the above Scott Mission hopes to have space for 30-60 beds in a new building.

There are also facilities for the more permanent care of homeless men. These include -

New Seaton House operated by Toronto Department of Welfare has 250 beds for unemployable men certified by a physician as unable to work.

House of Providence 100-150 beds for homeless residents, mostly mentally deficient, and for semi-transients during the winter months. The House of Providence is primarily a home for the aged, and its services to homeless men will be curtailed in a few years when the House moves to Scarborough.

House of Ascension (Church of the Good Samaritan) 80 beds for various types of homeless men, particularly the elderly.

Salvation Army Hostel - Approximately 100 beds for permanent residents who are mostly Old Age Pensioners or Veterans Pensioners.

More specialized types of accommodation include; (a) eleven homes for the aged caring for older men; (b) the Working Boys' Home - for boys 15-18 years of age.

In addition to the public and charitable hostels there are a number of commercial lodging houses which cater to the transient man and provide lodgings on a nightly basis.

The resident homeless man lives predominately in cheap rooming houses. Accommodation provided in many of the lodging and rooming houses is below standard. Weekly rents in rooming houses, in terms of accommodation offered are high. There is every evidence that large numbers of men, particularly pensioners are living in conditions of

II. THE TORONTO PECTURE (cont'd.)

2.) Shelter (cont'd.)

privation and discomfort. Though a city by-law exists providing for the inspection of rooming houses it has not been implemented.

3.) Counselling and Casework Services

Some counselling of homeless men around personal problems is provided by the missions, churches, or other organizations to whom they turn for material assistance. The specialized casework agencies in particular the family service agencies provide limited service. The Committee was not able to assess the amount and quality of counselling. In light of the large number of men, the brief contact of organizations with them, and small staff complements it would appear to be limited. However, our charitable and religious groups are doing their utmost to help those men who come to them for guidance and the values of pastoral counselling must not be overlooked.

4.) Recreational Services

Recreational services for homeless and transient men in Toronto are extremely limited. There is only one agency providing service in this field, the Good Neighbours' Club which works with unemployed men 50 years of age and over.

The Good Neighbours' Club is a recreational and counselling centre for unemployed men 50 years of age and over. Open seven days each week; it provides facilities for games, television, washing, haircuts, etc. Members are provided with counselling and emergency assistance. About 60 percent of the registrants in 1959 were between 50 and 60 years of age. Occupationally most of the men have been unskilled or semiskilled workers, now permanently unemployed. The agency reports that its present facilities are not adequate to meet demands for service.

Plans for the new Scott Mission include a lounge for older men.

5.) Employment Services

The National Employment Service is the major agency in this field. It operates a free employment service maintaining records of job opportunities and registering job applicants. Special services are extended in testing, counselling and rehabilitation for youth, veterans, older citizens and handicapped applicants. It operates also a casual labour pool, Applications by transients are kept alive for seven days, and for non-transients for 14 days after which periods they become dormant, unless requested otherwise by the applicant. However, if an

II. THE TORONTO PICTURE (contid.)

5.) Employment Services (cont'd.)

applicant for work is in receipt of Unemployment Insurance his application is kept alive until benefits are exhausted. In selecting men for job openings, the National Employment Service is governed first by suitability, then by veterans status, length of registration and domestic responsibility. Transients are not greatly affected by length of registration since, the Service reports, they apply mostly for casual work.

The Salvation Army also provides an unemployment service and when possible assists men to find work.

6.) Health Services

Health Services for homeless and transient mem are provided largely through hospital out-patient and emergency clinics. Those in receipt of government allowances, i.e., Old Age Assistance, Disabled Persons or Blind Persons! Allowances, or of general welfare assistance are eligible for home and office care in accordance with the provision of the Cntario Medical Welfare Plan. Costs of hospitalization of indigent persons not covered by the hospital insurance program are met by the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

Generally agencies working with homeless and transient men did not emphasize ill health as a major problem of homeless and transient men. An exception was one mission which estimated that 90 percent of men coming to them required health services. In its new Seaton House, the City of Toronto increased by 70 the number of beds for homeless men medically certified as unable to work.

7.) Vocational Training and Rehabilitation.

Comportunities for vocational rehabilitation for homeless and transient men are extremely limited. Vocational training for the incapacitated may be provided under the Provincial Rehabilitation Services Act, the cost being shared by the Federal and Provincial Authorities. If an incapacitated unemployed person is not able to qualify under that Act then training may be provided under the General Welfare Assistance Act, the costs being shared by the Municipality or the Province. In the latter instance occupational training is provided where the local Department of Welfare is of the opinion that the client can benefit from it.

The Society for Crippled Civilians provides sheltered employment for the physically and mentally disabled and undoubtedly is assisting a certain number of unattached disabled men. The United Church is planning to include a workshop program in its new Fred Victor Mission.

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II. THE TORONTO PICTURE (cont'd.)

7.) Vocational Training and Rehabilitation (cont'd.)

An adequate program of vocational rehabilitation involves facilities for guidance, testing for aptitudes and skills; vocational training and re-training courses, sheltered workshop and placement services. Such services for homeless and transient men have yet to be developed.

8.) Social Rehabilitation

At its Rehabilitation Centre the Salvation Army provides a combined residential workshop and counselling program for some seventy men. Emphasis is placed upon the reclamation of the alcoholic and the offender. The men, each having their own room live at the centre during their rehabilitation program. The program has developed out of the army's conviction that rehabilitation could be most effectively brought about if men were removed from adverse community influences and given opportunity to develop personal responsibility in an atmosphere of group living and group activity.

SECTION D

ASSESSMENT OF PRESENT SERVICES

I. TYPES OF SERVICES REQUIRED

In light of information obtained by the Committee on the size of the problem and on the types, circumstances and needs of homeless and unemployed men the following would appear to be essential elements in any overall approach to the problem.

- (1) Public financial aid in the form of insurance benefits, categorical public assistance or general unemployment adequate to maintain a level of living consistent with health and decency and provided to men in need where they are, irrespective of residence. At present, as a result of complications of municipal residence requirements many without unemployment insurance and without established residence are denied public aid. They are either forced to move on to other cities which may have more liberal policies, or must turn to the less secure and more spasmodic assistance provided by private groups. Not until all communities are able to recognize a common responsibility for the basic needs of homeless and transient men can uniformity of service be provided across the country. With this achieved there will be greater opportunity for preventive and rehabilitation services.
- (2) Adequate arrangements for the sharing of costs among different levels of government. Realistically municipalities will hesitate to develop services for non-residents if a heavy burden on the tax-rate is the result.
- (3) Adequate living accommodation in hostels or commercial rooming houses licensed and supervised by public authorities. There should be accommodation designed to fill the needs of different groups. Permitted length of stay in hostels should be flexible. If it is not possible for a man to find employment he should be placed in normal accommodation in the community and granted unemployment assistance irrespective of legal residence.

I. TYPES OF SERVICES REQUIRED (cont'd.)

- (4) Vocational training and re-training programs designed to overcome chronic unemployment among unskilled workers or those whose skills are outdated. In this regard the Committee is aware that many men will lack the educational background necessary for the vocational training for highly skilled jobs. For this group emphasis should be upon social rehabilitation.
- (5) Daytime facilities for shelter and recreation.
- (6) Rehabilitation services including (a) casework and counselling; (b) medical and psychiatric treatment; (c) workshop programs (i) for those who require a period of sheltered employment for vocational rehabilitation and (ii) to provide activity and some remuneration for the permanently unemployed men.
- (7) Employment counselling and placement services.
- (8) Adequate preventive health service to detect latent illness.
- (9) Effective co-ordination of services to prevent duplication to bring about clear definition of the roles of respective agencies.
- (10) A central clearing house for the registration of men applying for assistance.

II. ADEQUACY OF PRESENT SERVICES

1.) Legislation

Assistance to unemployed homeless men is provided under two major legislative programs. - Unemployment Insurance and Unemployment Assistance.

With regard to the former the Committee has noted recommendations made by the Canadian Welfare Council in its 1958 Report on Social Security for Canada for the extension and improvement of the program. These recommendations were aimed at duration of benefit periods, eligibility, the extension of coverage to as many of the uncovered groups as possible, and an increase in the ratio of benefits to earnings. These recommendations, which have received support of the Social Planning Council would, if implemented result in a more comprehensive service to the unemployed man.

With regard to categorical and general welfare assistance the Committee sees need for thorough examination of the adequacy of present levels of benefits and the lessening and eventual elimination of municipal residence requirements. During the past three years a number of reports issued by the Canadian Welfare Council, the Catario Welfare Council and the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto have drawn attention to the basic principles of public aid both with regard to levels of benefits and to administration.

cont'd.

II. ADEQUACY OF PRESENT SERVICES (cont'd.)

2.) Division of Responsibility

The problem of the homeless and transient man is national as well as local. The Committee heard opinions to the effect that greater leadership should be assumed by the federal government in the provision of hostel and related services. To date the federal authorities have indicated that such programs would be beyond federal jurisdiction. In Contario the provincial government shares in the cost of assistance and in the costs of building hostels erected by charitable organizations. Despite, however, federal and provincial sharing of costs the amount and quality of service provided to the transient man is primarily dependent upon local government policies which in turn depend upon local attitudes and resources. Clearly there is need for examination of the whole problem of the respective functions of the different levels of government.

3.) Quality of Existing Services

Standards of hostel accommodation for homeless and transient men have, with the building of new facilities by the City of Toronto, the Salvation Army and the Fred Victor Mission improved considerably.

However, hostels care for all types and congregate together the abstainer and the drinker, the honest and the dishonest, the normal and the abnormal, the youth and the rogue. Accommodation in commercial lodging and rooming houses is frequently below standard and there is a lack of supervision or inspection by public authorities.

With regard to the work of denominational groups the Committee was impressed with the humane approach taken in assisting men who the community generally often dismisses as misfits and as unworthy. Yet the Committee was of the opinion that the open door policy of most. missions, that is the provision of service to all those in need, has led to unnecessary or at least unwise overlapping or duplication of services. There are elements in the present situation which can encourage dependency which permits men to move from door to door in a vicious circle which becomes progressively more difficult to escape from; and men of all types meet and mingle at each place - youth, the alcoholic, the offender, the old. There is some development of function on a geographic basis, and indications of a trend toward specialization in services. The establishment of its Rehabilitation Centre by the Salvation Army plans , and plans for a workshop at the Fred Victor Mission represent a needed and healthy branching out into new fields of work.

II. ADEQUACY OF PRESENT SERVICES (cont'd.)

4.) Gaps in Service

With regard to accommodation the Committee is of the opinion that present hostel facilities together with those now under construction or in the planning stages will be adequate to meet existing needs. Men are still sleeping in freight cars, in parks during warm weather, yet hostels reported to the Committee that generally they have not had to turn men away because of lack of accommodation.

There is, however, a need for more specialized institutions for the temporary or continuing care of special groups. These might include youth hostels, boarding homes for the older unemployed man, or supervised sheltered care facilities for special groups of physically or mentally disabled men. For example, at present, the House of Providence provides care to a number of mentally deficient men referred by the Ontario Hospital.

The most serious gaps in present services in the Committee's views are -

- (a) The lack of daytime facilities for relaxation and recreation. The Good Neighbours! Club which provides such services for middle aged and older men is the only agency of this kind and has limited facilities.
- (b) A lack of social and vocational rehabilitation services.
 Casework and groupwork programs are severely limited. Our community has yet to come to grips with the restoration of the "beaten man". There is common agreement that many men are beyond rehabilitation and the Committee admits necessity of realism in this regard. It recognizes also that rehabilitation would not be effective unless the process can be culminated by suitable placement in employment.
- (c) The lack of vocational training and retraining programs. Vocational training is a basic need of many long-term unemployed and marginal workers. It could be accomplished under the Vocational Training Co-ordination Act and also under Section 59 of the Unemployment Insurance Act. The latter authorizes the Commission to require an insured worker on penalty of disqualification for benefit to attend a course of instruction on training for the purpose of becoming or keeping fit for employment. Greater vocational training facilities for youth are becoming an urgent necessity.

II, ADEQUACY OF PRESENT SERVICES (cont'd.)

5.) Co-ordination and Planning

There is a serious lack of overall planning and co-ordination of services. There is an immediate and continuing need for agencies in this field to meet together to exchange information and to clarify their roles.

6.) Record Keeping and Statistics

Records and statistics maintained by agencies vary in amount and method. Clearly a number of organizations lack facilities to maintain good statistics. As a result precise information on trends, or the number of different types of men is not obtainable. The development of uniform registration cards for use across the country would provide comparable data that could be used by all organizations working in the field.

7.) Research Needs

There is need for further research into the numbers, kinds and needs of the homeless and transient men both on a national and local basis. Such research is needed if future services are to be soundly planned.

Committee's Recommendations

- 1.) That together with other needy groups the unemployed homeless and transient man should have opportunity to benefit from programs of financial aid that are adequate both in terms of level of benefits and administration and that accordingly
 - (a) The Canadian Welfare Council continue to press for implementation of its recommendations for the broadening and strengthening of the federal unemployment insurance program as set forth in its Policy Statement on Social Security for Canada.
 - (b) The Canadian Welfare Council, together with provincial and local planning councils continue to work towards adequate public assistance programs including general welfare assistance for the unemployed and in particular
 - (c) This report be brought to the attention of the Financial Assistance Implementation Committee of the Social Planning Council as further evidence of need to work continually towards strengthened programs of financial assistance in Metropolitan Toronto.

Committee's Recommendations (cont'd.)

- 2.) (a) That in order to develop uniform and effective services throughout the country planning be undertaken on a national level and that in particular the Canadian Welfare Council in developing policy in this area examine the roles of senior levels of government with regard to -
 - (1) leadership in developing standards of services;
 - (2) financial responsibility for assistance to homeless and transient men particularly of those without municipal residence.
 - (3) the development of a uniform method of registering applicants for service that could be used by public departments and agencies across the country.
 - (b) With regard to (2) above the Committee recommends that consideration be given to the desirability of the assumption by federal and provincial governments of total responsibility for costs of assistance to transient men and that the Social Planning Council explore this matter further with the Contario Welfare Council.
- 3.) That in present and future planning of services to homeless and transient men in Metropolitan Toronto priority be given to rehabilitative services, including medical and vocational rehabilitation, casework, recreational and workshop services, and that the establishment of daytime rehabilitation day centres be given particular attention.
- 4.) That in the field of residential services priority be given to the needs of special groups of unattached males, for sheltered care, e.g., youth, the disabled, the mentally dependent.
- 5.) That present legislative provisions for Vocational Training and Retraining of the Unemployed and in particular Schedule M of the Canadian Vocational Training Co-ordination Act be more fully utilized, that the Canadian Welfare Council and the Social Planning Council continue to bring the need for vocational training programs to the attention of the appropriate federal and provincial authorities exploring with them present barriers to training programs to the end that these be overcome and effective services implemented.

Committee's Recommendations (contide)

- 6.) That in order to prevent increasing chronic unemployment among unskilled youth there is immediate need for social action to prevent early school leaving on the part of youth and to develop adequate facilities for vocational and trade training, and that the appropriate Section of the Social Planning Council explore the steps the Council might take in meeting this problem.
- 7.) That there is an urgent need for the Social Planning Council to bring together both the public and private organizations serving homeless and transient men for the purpose of developing greater co-ordination of services as well as for the exchange of information. Among the methods of co-ordination consideration might be given to the feasibility of a central registry.
- 8.) That the Social Planning Council review with the appropriate municipal departments present requirements for commercial recoming houses in Toronto and the need for a regular program of supervision and licensing.
- 9.) That there is an immediate need for further studies both for the purposes of clarification of terms and definitions, and for social and economic data and that therefore the Canadian Welfare Council, the Social Planning Council, School of Social Work and Social Service Departments of Universities consider ways and means of developing systematic and extensive research into social and economic problems relating to homeless and transient men.
- 10.) That the Social Planning Council appoint a Committee to develop plans for the implementation of the findings and recommendations of this study particularly those pertaining to co-ordination of services. It would be also the function of such a Committee to meet with organizations planning services in the field and review with them the implications of this report.